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...And Muhammad Is The Messenger of Allah

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...AND MUHAMMAD IS THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH

AN EXAMINATION OF THE FINALITY OF PROPHETHOOD AND MESSENGERSHIP

By

Abu Khalid Al-Muwahhid

INTRODUCTION

Indeed, All Praise belongs to Allah. We praise Allah, we seek his assistance and we beg for his forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allah from the evil of our own selves and from the evil of our deeds. Whomsoever Allah guides, no one can mislead and whomsoever Allah allows to go astray, none can guide. I bare witness and give open testimony that there is nothing worthy of worship except Allah, who has no associates and I bare witness that Muhammad is His Servant and His Messenger. To proceed:

Allah (swt) says;
Say: "If you (really) love Allah then follow me (i.e. accept Islamic Monotheism, follow the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*), Allah will love you and forgive you of your sins. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (Noble Qur'an 3:31)

Allah, Mighty and Majestic, explains in the Qur'an that any profession of love for Him can only be substantiated by following the last Messenger whom He has sent to humanity. The proof of one's love for Allah is in the belief and the acceptance of Muhammad ibn 'Abdillah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) as the last messenger of Allah and in following him in matters of faith, worship, and methodology. Within this framework is the belief which everyone who professes to be a Muslim should adhere to and that is the concept of the finality of revelation, Prophethood, and Messengership. This entails that the religion of Islam was completed and perfected 1400 years ago with the commissioning of Muhammad ibn 'Abdillah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) as a Prophet by Allah and that with his departure to the mercy of Allah, the conclusion of all divine revelation. It is sad to note, however, that despite the clarity of this matter as addressed by Allah, Glorified is He, in His Noble Qur'an and the clarity with which the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) spoke about this concept, many people throughout the years since the final revelation have claimed some form of special 'commission' from Allah. There have been those from past generations as well as those of recent times up until today who twist the concepts of *nubuwwah* (Prophethood) and *rasaalah* (Messengership) to include themselves as recipients of some form of *wahy* (revelation). It is equally as sad to acknowledge that some of these charlatans have influenced a number of people who identify themselves as Muslims to allow themselves to be consumed by this false and dangerous notion. Some claimants are more obviously false than others. Some, however, are so subtle in their dispensation of these ideas that even those Muslims who consciously adhere to the belief of the finality of Prophethood may find themselves dangerously close to *kufr* by following one who implies that the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) did not complete his mission, hence, the need for Islam to be 'modified' by additions and subtractions.

Let us briefly examine the concepts of *nubuwwah* (Prophethood) and *rasaalah* (Messengership) in Islam to understand the comprehensive nature of what it means to be a prophet and messenger. Many pseudo Islamic groups have taken advantage of some peoples' lack of understanding in these matters and have manipulated the meanings of these ideas in order to open the door to various false ideologies. In North America for instance, there have been those who wish to isolate and emphasize the word 'Prophet' because of the inherent religious connotation associated with the word in the minds of the people. In this regard, these groups readily admit that 'Prophethood' ended with Muhammad ibn 'Abdillah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam). However, what these groups either implicitly promote or explicitly state is that 'Messengership' has not been sealed, therefore allowing the possibility of any number of 'messengers' with new 'messages' to come after the passing of the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam). The leaders of these movements promote the notion that to be a 'messenger' is something minor and that Prophethood is the major God-given position. This is because many people have stood up throughout history and made a claim to Prophethood and in each and every case they were refuted by the scholars of the era and relegated to heretical status in the eyes of most Muslims. However in recent times, some have attempted to overcome this obstacle by minimizing the concept of a 'messenger' in Islam and have made some form of claim to it with the goal of using a more palatable word for the people to digest.

The word messenger in the Arabic language is '*rasool*' and the word 'message' is 'risaalah'. The Arabic word '*nabee*' means prophet. When speaking about the various Messengers and Prophets in the Qur'an, Allah uses both titles at different times to emphasize the various aspects of their missions. This includes the instances in the Qur'an where Allah (swt) speaks of or addresses the Messenger, Muhammad (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam). And since Allah did not reveal the Qur'an for any type of *hazl* ;

Verily! This (the Qur'an) is the Word that separates. And it is not a thing for *hazl* (amusement) (86: 13,14);

and warns against taking the Qur'an as *mahjoor* ;

And the Messenger will say: "O my Lord! Verily, my people deserted this Qur'an as *mahjoor* (something to be abandoned) (25:30),

We must understand that every word in the Qur'an is perfectly placed and is the most perfect word utilized to convey the most perfect message. A *Rasool* of Allah (swt) is a *nabee* (prophet) who has been given a *risaalah* to convey to the people. This characteristic can be found in those Prophets whom Allah distinguished with some sort of specific laws or scripture to deliver to a particular people. It is agreed by the scholars of this Ummah that the Prophet Nuh ('alayhis-salaam) was the first to receive this distinction based on Allah's statement;

Verily, We have inspired you (O Muhammad SAW) as We inspired Nuh (Noah) and the Prophets *after him*;

In this verse, Allah describes the similarity of the mission of Nuh ('alayhis-salaam) with that of the Messenger Muhammad (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) as well as the missions of those prophets *after* Nuh. Allah (swt) uses the words '…*ba'dihi*' to emphasize the fact that these specific types of prophets came after him (Nuh). A Prophet of Allah who does not have this specific trait still receives inspiration from Allah and may still convey general admonitions and glad tidings to others but not to the degree that they deliver a specific scripture or shari'ah. Allah specifically speaks about the purpose of the missions of these special Prophets;

Mankind were one community and Allah sent Prophets with glad tidings and warnings, and with them He sent the Scripture in truth to judge between people in matters wherein they differed. And only those to whom (the Scripture) was given differed concerning it after clear proofs had come unto them through hatred, one to another. Then Allah by His Leave guided those who believed to the truth of that wherein they differed. And Allah guides whom He wills to a Straight Path (2: 213).

In some ayat Allah (swt) makes a clear distinction between the nature of prophethood and prophethood accompanied by the position of *rasool*;

And mention in the Book (this Qur'an) Musa (Moses). Verily! He was chosen and he was a *Rasool* (Messenger) (and) a *Nabee* (Prophet) (19: 51).

If there were no need to distinguish between the two positions, there would be no need for Allah, Mighty and Majestic, to include both titles for Musa, for Allah is high above using words merely for *hazl* (amusement). This point is further emphasized when we consider what Allah says two verses afterwards about the brother of Musa, Harun, when he says;

And We bestowed on him his brother Harun (Aaron), (also) a Nabee (Prophet), out of Our Mercy (19:53).

It is clear that though Harun was distinguished as a Nabee, he was not given the title of Rasool. Ibn Katheer (rahimahullah) in his Tafseerul-Qur'anil-Adheem notes about verse 19:51 in which Allah describes Musa as Rasool and Nabee:

'Allah combined these two descriptions for him. For Verily, He was one of the greatest messengers and one of the five messengers of strong will. They are Nuh, Ibrahim, Musa, 'Isa, and Muhammad. May the blessings of Allah be upon them and all the prophets.' (Vol.6,pg.274)

This distinction is also made clear in the following verses;

And mention in the Book (the Qur'an) Isma'il (Ishmael). Verily! He was true to what he promised, and he was a Rasool (Messenger) and a Nabee (Prophet). (19:54)

Ibn Katheer states about this verse:

In this is a proof of Isma'il's favored status over his brother, Ishaq. Ishaq was only described as being a prophet but Isma'il was described with both Prophethood and Messengership. (Vol.6,pg.275)

Allah continues describing the mission of Isma'il as one of conveying specific instructions and commandments to his people;

And he used to enjoin on his family and his people *As-Salaat* (the prayers) and the *Zakaat*, and his Lord was pleased with him (19:55)

The Arabic **'ya'muru ahlahu bis-salaati-wa'zakaah'** literally means he commanded his people with the prayer and Zakaat. This is evidence that he was commissioned to enjoin upon his people a specific shari'ah which is the distinguishing characteristic of a Nabee who is also a Rasoolullah. With this understanding, we can conclude that to claim to be a 'messenger' of Allah without authority from Allah is equally if not more heretical than the claim to prophethood because within the context of Islam, this means that the one who makes the claim has specific laws and commandments directly from Allah, Mighty and Majestic.

THE SEAL OF THE PROPHETS AND MESSENGERS

Let us now examine an aspect of belief that is required of every Muslim and that is the (proper) belief in Allah, His Angels, His Messengers, His Books, the last day, and the pre-decree of Allah, the good of it and the bad of it. For the purpose of this discussion we will focus on the requirement of the belief in His Messengers. Most Muslims will readily name off the articles of belief which I have just listed. However, the part of this belief system that is neglected by some is the *kaifiyyah* or the manner in which we should believe in these articles. It is not sufficient to simply say,' I believe in (God) Allah…' but it is the proper belief in Allah that one must have in order to be considered a believer. If a person claims to believe in Allah, yet this person also believes that He has a son or is contained in his creation in some manner or is somehow similar to his creation, then this person has not established the proper belief in Allah. This same rule can be applied to all of the areas of faith. For this discussion, it is the proper belief in the Messengers of Allah and everything that is contained within this belief. As with all other areas of eemaan, the correct belief is also what resides in the heart and is manifested on the tongue and the limbs. Ibn Taymiyyah (rahimahullah) states in his Al-'Aqeedatul-Waasitiyyah:

It is part of the principles of Ahl-us-Sunnah Wa'l-Jamaa'ah that deen and eemaan are names of profession and practice – profession by the heart and tongue and actions by the heart tongue and the limbs.

The scholars of this religion have extracted from the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) that proper belief in the Messengers encompasses the principle that the message of Islam was completed and perfected with the advent of Muhammad (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and that He is the Seal of The Prophets and Messengers. Allah says;

Muhammad (SAW) is not the father of any man among you, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the last (end) of the Prophets. And Allah is Ever All-Aware of everything (33:40)

Allah, The Mighty, states that indeed, Muhammad (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) is *Rasoolullah* and has conferred upon him the title which implies that this will not be applicable to anyone after him and has described him as *Khaataman-Naabiyyeen* – The Seal (end) of the Prophets. *Khaatam* is rooted in the word *khataba* which means to seal off, close, terminate, and conclude. A person with a weak understanding of this verse may misinterpret it as the sealing off of Prophethood but not messengership because of the phrase *Khaataman-Naabiyyeen*. However, as we have previously stated, Allah (swt) did not reveal the Qur'an for amusement or foolishness and that his words are perfectly chosen and placed even though we may not comprehend the wisdom of it. Allah has confirmed that the Messenger (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) has been endowed with the distinction of being not only a messenger of Allah but THE Messenger of Allah which, as we have discussed, is a distinction beyond Prophethood. With this understanding, all those prophets to whom Allah has given the distinction of rasaalah are Messengers and Prophets. In other words all Messengers are Prophets but not all Prophets are Messengers. Logically, if there is a conclusion (khaatam) of Prophethood then this automatically means that rasaalah has come to an end also. Ibn Katheer comments on the Qur'anic verse about the 'Seal of The Prophets' in Tafseerul-Qur'anil-'Adheem;

'Hence this verse is a clear proof of the fact that no prophet will come after Muhammad (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and when it is said that no prophet will come after Him, it is a foregone conclusion that no messenger will succeed him either, for the office of a messenger holds prominence over the office of a prophet. Every messenger is a prophet but all prophets are not messengers. Anyone who lays a claim to prophethood after Muhammad (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) is a liar, a disruptionist, an imposter, depraved and a seducer despite his wondrous jugglery and magical feats. Anyone who would make this claim in the future till the end of the world belongs to this class.' (Vol.3, pp. 493-494)

The Messenger of Allah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) himself explains quite clearly the concept of finality of messengership and prophethood when He (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said,

' Verily, Ar-Rasaalah (the messengership) and An-Nubuwwah (the prophethood) ends with Me so there will be no Messenger nor Prophet after Me.' (At-Tirmidhi, Ahmad)

This statement leaves no ambiguity concerning the matter. Anyone who disputes this issue after this statement of Allah's Messenger (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) must remember Allah's statement when He says;

But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith, until they make you (O Muhammad SAW) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission. (4:65)

'Allamah Syed Mahmood Alusi (d. 1270 A.H.) states in Tafseer Ruh-ul-Ma'ani;

'The word 'prophet' is common, but the word 'Messenger' has a particular significance. Hence when the Holy (sic) Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) is called the 'Seal of Prophets', it necessarily follows that he is also the seal of the Messengers.'

'That he (Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) was the final prophet, is ordained by the Qur'an, acknowledged by the Sunnah and agreed upon by the Ummah; hence a claimant to the contrary will be (determined as) Kaafir (unbeliever) and put to death if he is persistent.' (vol.22, pg.32)

Imam Abu Hameed Al-Ghazali states in Al Iqtisad fil Etiqad:

"No doubt the Ummah (all Muslims) has unanimously understood from this word ('Khaatam-un-Nabiyyeen') and its circumstantial reference to mean non-existence of a 'Nabee' or 'Rasool' ever after Muhammad (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and that (this word calls for) no reservation or tacit interpretation in it; hence its dissident is certainly the one who rejects the Ummah's unanimity". (Pg. 123)

The Messenger of Allah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) has also said in a hadeeth recorded by Imam Ahmad;

'Their will be thirty liars among my Ummah. Each one will claim that he is a prophet. But I am the last of the Prophets and there will be no Prophet after Me.'

The Messenger of Allah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said,' *I have many names; I am Muhammad. I am Ahmad. I am Al-Maahee (the obliterator) by whom Allah obliterates disbelief. I am Al-Haashir (the gatherer) who gathers the people at my feet. I am Al-'Aqib (the successor) whom none comes after.' (Bukhari)*

The belief in the Finality of Prophethood and Messengership is part of the fundamental creed of Islam and it is the belief of the first and best generation of Islam as well as those who succeeded them and those who succeeded them. It is a fundamental belief of those Muslims who adhere to the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah and who do not break off from the main body of Muslims. Imam Abu Ja'far At-Tahawi (d.321 A.H.) states in Al-'Aqeedatut-Tahawiyah;

'…and that He (Muhammad, sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) is the last of the Prophets.'

Imam Abu Muhammad ibn Qudamah Al-Maqdisi (d.620 A.H.) states in 'Luma'atul-I'tiqaad;

'Muhammad (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) is the Messenger of Allah and the last of the Prophets, and the Master of the Messengers.'

An additional aspect of belief concerning the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) is that he was sent to mankind and that he was a mercy to all.

Say (O Muhammad SAW): "O mankind! Verily, I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allah (7:158)

And We have sent you (O Muhammad SAW) not but as a mercy for the *'Aalameen* (mankind, jinns and all that exists) (21:107)

The Messenger of Allah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said,

'I have been given five things which were not given to anyone else before me. Every Prophet used to be sent specifically to his own people but I have been sent to all humanity. The spoils of war have been made lawful for me, yet they were not lawful to anyone else before me. The Earth has been made pure for me and a source of purification and a place for prayer so a person can pray anywhere the time for prayer finds him. Allah has made me victorious by instilling fear in my enemies for a distance of one month's journey. I have been given the right of intercession.' (Bukhari)

It is absolutely clear that all textual evidences from the Qur'an and the Sunnah explain in detail the fact that the Messenger of Allah, Muhammad ibn 'Abdillah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) was sent to all of humanity, hence, there is no need for any additional messages or messengers. Is it at all logical that though Islam carefully emphasizes this concept, mankind still has a need for 'new' messengers to come and add to or subtract from the religion? Sometimes the argument is made that a particular people in particular circumstances need a particular message. Allah, The Exalted, has given the response to this argument in the Qur'an itself;

Say (O Muhammad SAW): "No wage do I ask of you for this, nor am I one of the *Mutakallifûn* (those who pretend and fabricate things which do not exist).It (this Qur'an) is only a Reminder for all the *'Aalameen* (mankind and jinns) (38:86-87).

One of the motivations of those who claim some form of special relationship with Allah, The Most High, is to make those things which Allah has made prohibited permissible and to make the permissible prohibited usually for material, social, or political gain for themselves. However, these attempts are usually in direct opposition to the well known texts of Islam so the only way to justify any drastic changes in the religion, the false-prophets must establish some sort of *sultaan* (authority) for themselves and their doctrines. What better *sultaan* than direct revelation from Allah (swt)? Nevertheless, any changes in the deen of Islam have been emphatically warned against by the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam),

'Whoever does an act that is not in accord with our matter (the Sunnah) will have it rejected.' (Bukhari, Muslim)

Narrated by Ibn Mas'ood (radhiya'llahu'anhu) ;

'The Messenger of Allah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) drew a straight line for us. Then he said, "This is the path of Allah." Then He drew lines to the left of it and to the right of it. He then said, "These are divergent paths. Upon each of those paths is a devil calling to that path." (Ahmad, Ibn Majah)

It is astonishing that even after all of the evidence, we still find different groups in the past and in the present who try to blur the lines of Prophethood and Messengership either by the actual words on their tongues or by their actions. It is not necessary to proclaim *wahy* (revelation) with one's speech to fall into the category of a false prophet or messenger. If one has in fact endowed himself with the notion of infallibility, enjoins his followers to disobey Allah and His Messenger (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) by changing specific aspects of the shari'ah or by bringing entirely new beliefs/laws as a result of some special 'insight' or

‘inspiration’ he has been blessed with that the previous generations were not privy to, then he has positioned himself in the place of Allah’s Last Messenger (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam).

As was mentioned previously, the belief of a believer must not only be uttered by the tongue but it has to be confirmed in the heart and evident in the actions. When we say,’ I bare witness that there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger’, it must be accompanied by what already exists in our hearts and the deeds of our limbs must be in accordance with our declaration. What those who follow such individuals must realize is that by obeying these types of people while in disobedience to Allah and his Messenger, it becomes tantamount to disbelief and *shirk* as in the case of the Jews and Christians who obeyed their Rabbis and monks while disobeying the commandments of Allah.

They (Jews and Christians) took their rabbis and their monks to be their lords besides Allah…(9:31)

It is reported that ‘Adi ibn Haatim heard the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) recite this verse and said,’ O Messenger of Allah (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam)! They do not worship them. The Messenger of Allah (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) said, ‘They certainly do. They made lawful things as unlawful and made unlawful things as lawful and they (the people) followed them and by doing so they really worshipped them.’ (Ahmad, At-Tirmidhi, Ibn Jarir)

Even though all of these evidences refute the notion of nubuwwah and rasaalah after the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam), the fact that they must appear in succession up until the last days has been foretold by the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) himself so it becomes necessary to equip ourselves with the truth so we do not fall prey to their lies.

PROPHECIES OF FALSE PROPHETS

Let us now turn our attention to some of the warnings that the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) has left with us as well as mention some specific instances of false claims to prophethood.

Narrated by Jabir ibn Samoorah;

I heard the Prophet (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) say, ‘ Just before the hour there will be many liars.’ (Muslim)

From Abu Hurayrah;

The Prophet (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) said,’The Hour will not come until nearly thirty ‘dajjaleen’ (liars) appear, each one claiming to be a messenger from Allah.’ (Bukhari, Muslim)

The Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said,'There will be dajjals and liars among my Ummah. They will tell you something new, which neither you nor your forefathers have heard. Be on your guard against them, and do not let them lead you astray.'(Ahmad)

The Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) *said,' The Hour will not come until nearly thirty 'dajjaleen' (liars) appear, each one claiming to be a messenger from Allah. Wealth increases, tribulations appear and al-Harj increases.' Someone asked,'What is al-Harj?' He* (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) *said,'Killing, killing.' (Ahmad)*

Ibn 'Umar said,' *I heard The Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) say,' Among my Ummah there will be more than seventy callers, each of whom will be calling people to hellfire. If I wished, I could tell you their names and tribes.*

There have been instances throughout history where these types of individuals have appeared and have caused much confusion within the Ummah. One such individual known infamously as Musaylimah Al-Kadhdhaab (the liar) appeared during the time of the Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam). Al-Kadhdhaab came to Madinah in the ninth year of Hijrah along with the Bani Haneefa delegation. At first he began to boastfully assert himself as the successor to the Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam). He proclaimed himself a prophet in the tenth year of Hijrah after his return to Al-Yamama and began to forge revelation from Allah.

It is narrated by Abu Bakrah; *The people spoke a great deal against Musaylimah before the Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said anything about him. Then the Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) got up to give a speech and said, '…as for this man about whom you have spoken so much – he is one of the thirty liars who will appear before the Hour, and there is no town which will not feel the fear of the Dajjal.' (Ahmad)*

Safi Al-Mubarakpuri writes in Ar-Raheeq-ul-Makhtoom:

'…To confirm his prophecy, he started uttering rhymed statements. He said that it was lawful to drink wine and commit adultery. He, however, bore witness that the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) was a real Prophet. His people, who were fascinated by what he allowed them to do, followed him and made bargains with him. He grew so prominent among them that they called him the beneficent of Al-Yamama.' (pg.453)

It is interesting to note that the blueprint for forgery laid down by Al-Kadhdhaab would become adopted in some form by those imposters that have come after him. Material gain, political ambition, and declaring the impermissible to be permissible in order to suit the desires of the people have been characteristics of almost all of the various cults, sects, etc. that claim some form of new revelation. Al-Kadhdhaab was finally killed during the khilaafah of Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq by the ex-slave Wahshi in 12 A.H.

After Al-Kadhdhaab's claim to Prophethood, another man named Al-Aswad Al-'Ansi claimed to be a messenger from Allah. He was killed a day and a half before the death of the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam). Through the years many groups have been spun off by various claims to hidden revelation to the point where some of the claimants went as far as to say they were the manifestation of Allah. After the break off the Raafidhah sects (Shi'a) from the people of the Sunnah, many offshoots sprang up like those of the Druze,

which was started by a man named Hamzah ibn Ali ibn Ahmad ad-Darazee during the time of the sixth Faatimid ruler Al-Haakim ibn Amiru'llah. The Druzes believed that Allah, through Haakim, revealed a final message to humanity. They also believed that another man named Muhammad (not the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) was the messenger of Allah and they claimed to have a secret book from Allah called al-hikmah. This group later became known as the Boharas. There are those who go by the name Baha'i who claim that their leader is the 'Babullah' (sometimes Bahaullah) and is the secret gate to the Mahdi. A man by the name of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad who lived in the Indian sub-continent during the 19th century not only claimed prophethood, but also claimed to be Prophet Muhammad, Jesus, and the Mahdi. His followers are known as the Qadianis or the Ahmadiyyahs. In North America during the early 20th century, a man named Elijah Poole believed that he had an encounter with Allah in the person of a man who called himself Fard Muhammad among many things and who from that point on began building a movement exclusively for African-Americans based on the premise that he was the last Messenger of Allah. His doctrines were comprised of beliefs and laws that were most times in direct opposition to the true Islamic texts of Qur'an and Sunnah. It is also interesting to note the Qadiani influence upon this movement in their teachings and circumstances. They even read from the Qadiani mistranslation of the Qur'an. This movement and its various offshoots exist up until today. To illustrate the premise that these groups still promote the possibility of messengers after The Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam), consider a recent quote from an inheritor of Elijah's movement;

'Muhammed comes in a progression, beginning with the first Prophet that G-d missioned, or the first Messenger of G-d, and ending that progression with Muhammed (PBUH), the Last Prophet -not the last Messenger, but the Last Prophet.' (Muslim Journal, April 26, 2002)

A mathematician and computer programmer named Richard (Rashad) Khalifah claimed to have deciphered a complicated numerological code in the Qur'an. The problem is that for his code to make sense even in his mind, he had to remove two ayat from the Qur'an in his own mistranslation. His movement evolved into what is now known as the International Community of Submitters. Eventually he would make the claim that he was the messenger of Allah and teach that the Sunnah was not a part of Islam. His followers still promote this idea through the Internet and various other media and have deceived many people into actually using Richard Khalifah's translation of the Qur'an as a mainstream body of reference.

In his commentary on Imam At-Tahawi's Al-'Aqeedat-ut-Tahawiyah, 'Ali ibn Abi Al-'Izz Al-Adhru'i (d.792 A.H.) states about the phenomenon of false claimants to Prophethood:

'Never did a false prophet rise but his ignorance, lies, corrupt ways and the devils hold on him, have been so apparent to anyone endowed with some common sense that he had no difficulty in discovering his falsity. That is because there is no recourse to a prophet but to order some things and forbid others. Thus, it is in the scheme of things that he should do things that render his truthfulness manifest. On the other hand, an imposter too cannot escape but do some things and inform (about the unseen) exposing himself in so doing, in ways more than one.' (Sharh Al-'Aqeedat-ut-Tahawiyah, pg.46)

As we can see from the evidence, it is inevitable that there will be liars calling to falsehood until the last day. It is our responsibility to be prepared with the knowledge of Qur'an and

Sunnah so we do not fall prey to their deceptions. A liar will always be exposed and his lies will always be vulnerable to the truth. May Allah protect us from their fitnah. Ameen.

CONCLUSION

The concept of any message, revelation, or modification coming after the passing of the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) is unacceptable for one simple, fundamental reason; it is a direct challenge to the statement of Allah;

This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion (5:3)

Any claim that something was revealed or inspired to anyone after this is a claim that Allah Glorified is He, did not speak the truth. Exalted and far removed is He from any imperfections. Therefore, the one who explicitly or implicitly makes this claim has left the fold of Islam and entered into disbelief as explained to us by the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and the scholars of Islam. The idea of a form of *wahy* after the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) also implies that Allah did not grant victory to his Messenger (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and that ultimately, the Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) did not complete his mission. It undermines the entire basis for obedience to Allah and His Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) for it suggests that the Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) is not the most complete and perfect example for us to follow and that we are in need of someone to show us a more 'appropriate' example because of different times, circumstances, etc. However, the only true guidance is the guidance of the Messenger Muhammad (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and the only way to attain success in this life and the hereafter is to embrace his Sunnah and follow his example. We must understand the authority of the Sunnah in our lives and strive to remain firm upon it. Almost all of the groups that have evolved out of a claim to prophethood have sought to separate the Sunnah from Islam by diminishing the importance of adhering to the example of the Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam). But Praise be to Allah, the Lord of Everything in existence who has preserved the *dhikr* as he has promised and has made it a clear guide for us to follow until the Day of Judgment. The Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said,

'I have left among you two matters that if you adhere to them you will never be misguided: The Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet.'(Maalik, Haakim, Bayhaqi)

'There is nothing which will bring you closer to paradise and remove you farther away from the hellfire except that I have commanded you to do it.' (Al-Mustadrak, Sharh us-Sunnah)

'Certainly, the one who will live among you will see lots of differences. So stick to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly guided successors. Bite onto that with your molar teeth and avoid newly invented matters. Verily, every heresy is a going astray.' (Ahmad, Abu Dawood, Tirmidhi, and others)



“…And obey Allah and the Messenger that you may obtain mercy.”

May Allah, Mighty and Majestic, protect us from the evils of going astray and make us firm upon the Sunnah of His Messenger (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam). Ameen.